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A Brief

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EPISTLE

FOR

Unity and Good Order,

Among all Friends Professing the

Blessed Truth.

And Recommended to their
Monthly and Quarterly-Meet-
ings; and other Meetings
concerned about Truth's Af-
fairs.

BY

GEORGE WHITEHEAD.

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EPISTLE

FOR

Unity and Good Order

Among all Friends Professing the

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Ministry and Quarterly-Meet-
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GEORGE W. LITTLEHEAD.

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J. D. T. [illegible] in
[illegible]

A Brief

EPISTLE

F O R

Unity and Good Order,

Among all Friends Professing the

Blessed Truth.

MY dear and well-beloved
Friends, Brethren and
Sisters, whom I love in the
Truth; the Lord our God has
long brought a Concern and
Travel upon my Spirit for Love,

A 2

Peace

Peace and Good Order in the management of Affairs of Truth, and of his Church and People; and of late he hath renewed and laid the same weightily upon me, to impart something for the same end and purpose unto you, in his tender Love, which he hath shed abroad in my Heart towards his whole Heritage, as well as in the Hearts of many more faithful Friends and Brethren who have kept their Integrity and Habitations in his Love and Truth.

I hope you are not unsensible that our God who hath called us to be a peculiar People to himself, *Is a God of Order, and not of Confusion*, but truly known to be a *God of Love and Peace*; where

wherefore, *let the Peace of God*
rule in your Hearts, whereunto you
are called by one Spirit ; and then
That will Shew it self in your
Actions and Behaviour towards
one another, and towards all
Men, and oblige you to shun
the Contrary.

And I tenderly do desire,
 That all Friends professing
 Truth, *may carefully avoid all*
occasions of Offences, Divisions,
Reproach and Scandal in their
Words and Actions, and fol-
low those things which make
for Peace, Love, Union and
concord in all their Exercises
and Proceedings, that all things
may be done decently and in
good Order, becoming our Ho-
Profession.

Beloved Friends, pray remember the whollome Cautions and Counsell given by the Holy Apostle, for Good Order and Peace in the Service of the Church, viz.

If any Man seem to be Contentious, we have no such Customs, neither the Church of God, 1 Cor. 11. 16. Wherefore Contention and Strife ought to be excluded and shut out of the Church, both by Christ's Ministers and Elders and by the Church in General. And,

Let nothing be done through Strife or Vain Glory, but Lowliness of Mind let each esteem other better than themselves

And do all things without Murmurings and Disputings, that ye may be blameless and harmless, the Sons of God without Rebuke, &c. Phil. 2. 3. ver. 14, 15.

Surely, both Contention and Strife, Vain Glory, Murmurings and Disputings must be shut out of the Church of God and Christ; yea, out of all Assemblies and Meetings, for the Business and Service thereof; that the Spirit of Love and Meekness may more and more prevail, and in Humility, Brotherly Love and Condescension, Counsel and Wisdom from above will be received, and the Presence of our wonderful Councillor felt, and

attend Friends Meetings, to
 their Comfort, and cheerfully
 dispatching Business, to the
 Ease and Satisfaction of all
 Friends in Truth concerned.

It is very indecent, and
 much unbecoming a Christian
 Society or Meeting, to suffer
Contention and *Strife* among
 them ; or any contentious Spi-
 rit to trifle away time, and
 hinder the necessary Affairs
 thereof ; which we are sure
 can never be well done or
 settled, where *Contention* or
Strife is suffered, which ought
 not to have any place among
 us, nor any disorderly or con-
 fused Noise ; for both the
 Mens and Womens Meetings
 should be held and kept in
 Meek-

to Meekness in the Holy Fear,
 ally Wisdom and Power of God,
 the which is the real and true
 all authority of them, whereby
 they may be preserved in Love,
 and Humility, and in the pure
 and peaceable Wisdom which is
 from above: And in the same
 Wisdom and Power all Friends
 to stand in Truth's Dominion
 unanimously in one Mind and
 spirit against **That** which
 would disturb the Peace of
 the Church, or hinder the
 service thereof; for 'tis Pride,
 and pufft up and Self-conceited
 spirit that brings forth Con-
 tention and Strife, and that
 strives for Mastery and Rule;
 Only by Pride cometh Conten-
 tion, Prov. 13. 10. And the
 Lord resisteth the Proud, but
 giveth

giveth Grace to the Humble
James 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 5.

Such Turbulent Spirits who know not how to behave themselves in the Church of God, are very unfit to govern or rule therein; who cannot (or rather will not) govern their own Spirits, Wills or Passions, nor bridle their Tongues, nor keep within Bounds of that decent and orderly Behaviour which becomes our Christian Society and Holy Profession.

And whatever Differences may happen between any Persons professing the Blessed Truth, let them not contend one against another in any of your

our publick Meetings, nor
 with the Meetings, nor with
 any Faithful Friends thereof,
 whether they be Monthly, or
 quarterly: Nor any of you
 who are Members thereof)
 debate Matters of Differ-
 ence while the Parties differ-
 ing be present; for if they
 and Parties, or different Sen-
 timents in the Meeting, or be
 told thereof out of Meetings,
 it will be the more difficult
 to compose their Difference,
 or reconcile them; but let
 them withdraw a short time,
 for the Meeting's Quiet,
 and peaceable Consideration,
 what Advice to give in or-
 der to quiet the Parties con-
 cerned, and to have the Dif-
 ference put to as speedy an
 End

End as conveniently may be
 and yet so, as to judge
 thing before the time, or
 til the Lord come to open
 and give true Judgment and
 Counsel, for Peace; for there
 is need of his Presence to
 make True Agreement on
 Earth.

And let matters of Personal
 Differences or Complaints be
 impartially heard and deter-
 mined out of Meetings, by
 a few faithful impartial just
 Men, fearing God; either
 chosen by the Parties, or by
 the Meeting, as the Case
 may require, and that with-
 out delay, according to An-
 cient Advice; lest by delay
 of Justice, any of the Parties
 differ.

ering, be provoked or temp-
 to go to Law, to the great
 proach of Truth, and Grief
 Faithful Friends; for de-
 wing Justice, is judged a de-
 ing of Justice, and many
 nes attended with sad Con-
 quences.

All Friends, be careful to avoid
 and shun making or taking Par-
 es, or joining therewith, and
 giving Judgment afore-
 nd, before a fair Hearing;
 r both are Mischievous, and
 olong Differences, and en-
 ease Controversie: And, *He*
that answereth a Matter be-
re he beareth it, it is Folly
and Shame unto him, Proverbs
 8. 13.

My

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My Soul's Desire and Trav
vel hath long been, and still is
That all our Assemblies may be
kept and held in Love, Peace
and Good Order under Christ's
Government as the Lord and
Master thereof ; for that will
make them Honourable and of
Good Savour and Service, to
the Glory of God, and Friends
Great Comfort.

G. W.

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